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RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 8504  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9059  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S COURTESY CALL ON HOME MINISTER.

Classified By: Ambassador Patricia Butenis, reasons para 1.4d.

¶1. (SBU) On April 23, Ambassador paid an introductory call on Home Affairs Minister of State Lutfuzzoman Babar. Home Secretary Raj Hossain, Joint Secretary Ahkter Ahmed, MFA

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Americas DG Shahidul Islam, and RLA (notetaker) were also present.

¶2. (C) Babar thanked the USG for its growing training program with the police. Ambassador observed that we are also exploring options for engaging with the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in the form of human rights training, but that RAB extra-judicial killings remain a serious problem. RAB, Babar replied, consists of the best people the military and the police have to offer, and it enjoys the highest level of political and logistical support. All RAB "cross-fire" deaths, he added, are investigated by a senior Magistrate.

¶3. (SBU) Babar looks forward to his upcoming five-day visit to New York and Washington. The Bangladesh Embassy is seeking meetings for him with Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff, the Attorney General, and the National Security Council, he said. Babar also expressed interest in visiting a prison. In New York, he will meet with UN officials on peacekeeping operations. He also said he received a letter from Florida Governor Jeb Bush, and may go to visit him in Tallahassee if there is time. The Prime Minister's son, Tareque Rahman, will also make the trip but it is still not clear if NSI DG General Haider would also accompany.

¶4. (SBU) In response to Ambassador's advocacy for fair consideration for Motorola's bid to supply radios to the police, and our concerns that the process underway is not transparent or non-discriminatory, Babar asserted his total commitment to a transparent process. While it would not be appropriate for MHA to meet separately with just one bidder, he said, his staff would meet with the Embassy to review the tender documents. (Note: We are following up on this offer and will report separately.)

¶5. (SBU) Ambassador raised concern with the sub-standard diet now being fed to an American citizen on death row whose conviction is still under appeal. (Note: Without reference to the American's guilt or innocence, we have repeatedly noted several significant due process deficiencies with his trial.) Babar invited the Embassy to contact Home Secretary Hossain to work out details for a weekly care package to the American from his family.

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